

Hanover Advisory Committee
550 Hanover Street
Hanover, MA 02339
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Opening:

The meeting was opened at 7:01 p.m. by Chris Martin, Chairman.

Committee Attendees:

Chris Martin	Wayne Moores
Emmanuel Dockter	Brandon Freeman
Jerry O'Hearn	Sandra Hayes
Joan Port-Farwell	Angela Blanchard
Edward Hickey	

Other Attendees:

Janine Smith, Director of Finance
Robert Murray, Facilities Engineering Manager
Brian Barthelmes, Chairman Board of Selectmen

Approval of Minutes

Angela Blanchard made a motion to accept the minutes from *February 1, 2016*. This was seconded by Wayne Moores. All were in favor and the motion passed.

General discussion-FY17 Proposed Budget Presentation of February 1st

Chris Martin asked the Committee members to give their thoughts on the proposed budget presentation by the Town Manager Troy Clarkson. Edward Hickey would like to focus on line items that carry over significant funds each year. Reducing the budgets for those items could represent savings for the town. Chris Martin asked Janine Smith what percentage of the budget is carried over every year. Janine Smith stated that they try to keep it within the recommendation of 3 to 5 percent. The extra money is set aside each year and then reviewed and certified by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. Janine Smith explained this process in more detail for the benefit of the Committee. Chris Martin stated that town taxes are increasing too quickly and the Committee's role is to help mitigate this. Sandra Hayes inquired regarding the assessment cycle used by the Town Assessor. Janine Smith stated that Town Assessor Robert Cole could put some information together for the Committee regarding this or attend a Committee meeting. Joan Port-Farwell inquired regarding the overlay account for the Assessor's office. Janine Smith stated this amount is roughly \$250,000 to protect the town from unrealized property taxes and abatements. The Board of Assessors votes periodically to release these funds when they are not utilized. Joan Port-Farwell asked for a copy of the overlay account balance sheet. Janine Smith will obtain it for the Committee. Edward Hickey reiterated that he would like to see some department line item budgets reduced to encourage departments to be more fiscally conservative.

Robert Murray-FY17 Budget Review-Facilities Maintenance

Robert Murray provided the Committee with handouts for his presentation. Robert Murray started by explaining the chain of command within his department. Photos and descriptions of the current vehicles and equipment were reviewed. Robert Murray explained the responsibilities of his department. A review of this year's project accomplishments was given. A preventive maintenance

system was started through a program called SchoolDude. Chris Martin asked if playgrounds etc. can be added. Robert Murray stated yes, the list of items is continually growing and the program is very helpful. Chris Martin inquired regarding the repair of a building on the Ames Way property. Robert Murray stated that insurance had covered the cost of the repairs. A proposed budget for FY17 was given as well as goals and objectives. Robert Murray stated that replacement of the self-dimming ballasts at the high school was becoming a large expense. Chris Martin asked if the ballasts could be replaced with regular ones. Robert Murray will look into the suggestion. A status update was given regarding current approved capital projects. The list of requests for FY17 capital expenditures and projects was explained. Chris Martin asked if cost comparisons had been done regarding keeping older vehicles and performing additional maintenance. Robert Murray will look into the comparison. A discussion was had regarding replacement of smaller snow blowers at the high school with a large tractor type snow removal vehicle. The Committee thanked Robert Murray for his time and he departed at 9:00 pm.

General Discussion with Chairman Brian Barthelmes-Board of Selectmen

Chris Martin stated that costs need to be cut. Brian Barthelmes agreed, stating we are a small town and need to understand our limits. Residents have new costs and higher taxes and haven't necessarily received pay increases. Chris Martin asked how detailed does the Board of Selectmen want the Advisory Committee to become regarding cutting budget line items within departments. Brian Barthelmes stated that the Board of Selectmen would give the Advisory Committee their general feeling regarding budget items. Brian Barthelmes believes the Advisory Committee has great value and after the Committee does the research, the Board of Selectmen will support the Committee's recommendations. Edward Hickey suggested adding the ability to seek outside expertise for the Advisory Committee with possibly a small budget. Brian Barthelmes understands the Committee is comprised of volunteers and suggested an informal meeting with the Town Manager to discuss this idea. Having a list of items to research during the slower summer months was suggested. A discussion was had regarding CPC project funds and possibly changing the length of time they are encumbered once approved. A discussion was had regarding the review in progress for handling donations made to the town. A discussion was had regarding Park and Recreation and bringing them under town manager control.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is on Wednesday, February 24th at 7pm.

Adjournment

Angela Blanchard made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Sandra Hayes. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 9:43 pm.